

October 19, 1953

Dr. G. H. Bergold
Laboratory of Insect Pathology
Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., Canada

Dear Dr. Bergold:

Thank you for your cordial message of the 15th. It obviously would be impossible to investigate the mode of transmission of insect viruses until one can be confident of securing virus-free lines, but the very prevalence of the virus would be strong circumstantial evidence of an endosymbiosis. However, I have in mind the work of Fukushi and Black on the assimilation of plant viruses to insects. I have in question now not so much the persistent heredity of the viruses in the insect, but rather the diet as a possible recurrent source of virus agents. Are the insects commonly used as subjects of virus research amenable to culture under sterile (i.e. axenic) conditions? excluding even plant cells?

I appreciate your suggestion of a visit to your laboratory, and will keep it in mind for any future opportune occasion. In fact, last summer (August 1952) we vacationed in Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes, and drove right past your laboratory. It was a rather depressing rainy afternoon, and I am sorry that it did not occur to either of us at the time to visit it.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg

P.S. By all means, may I reciprocate your invitation. We are not often away from Madison except occasional summers.